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One Ballico Family Re-creates
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Southern Inspiration

Classic Revival finds peace in a California orchard

TEXT MARY NESTOR IMAGES ANDY ALLEN



Some people return from vacations with T-shirts and coffee mugs. This Ballico family came home from a visit to Williamsburg, Virginia, inspired by the architecture of the old South and determined to re-create a Colonial homestead on this 9-acre parcel surrounded by 2,500 acres of California almonds.

It quickly became obvious that their existing home would not be suitable for such a dramatic remodel. So with expert guidance from building designer Jim Madsen, they

Ⓜ A beautiful pool area with established plantings was updated with Pebble Tec® and new plumbing. In back, redwoods replaced magnolia trees, which weren't the best neighbors for the pool.

replaced it with a lovely brick beauty reminiscent of days when women sipped lemonade in shaded parlors and gentleman negotiated the price of tobacco and hogs.

Madsen, a licensed member of the AIBD who owns Design Classics in Turlock, immersed himself in the challenge. Using





⌚ White paint against red walls gives the dining room a dramatic contrast and heightens the beauty of the wood. In Jefferson's day, wall paint was primarily for the wealthy, and walls were often bright shades of turquoise, pink, or gold.

⌚ The dining pavilion located just off the family room has easy access to the back yard, which features beautiful landscaping around a classically styled pool.



Thomas Jefferson's Monticello as his guide, he gave them spacious living in a generously proportioned design.

The success rests in the seamless blending of old forms and new. Working with Atwater builder Sid Nightengale, Madsen set the stage with layers of authentic architectural detail. But he also made it livable for an active farming family who enjoys entertaining large groups. The red brick, for example, would have been entirely authentic, but the durable, weather-resistant Hardy Board siding and composite columns weren't available to those Southerners who refined the genre 200 years ago.

He specified a combination of wide-plank pine flooring against a more durable slate for high-traffic areas. The entrance foyer features a huge brass chandelier above a grand staircase with a custom-made Newell post that

Madsen designed himself. The circulation of the 4,200-square-foot home follows a traditional layout with communal spaces on the lower level and bedrooms upstairs.

Madsen's preliminary drawings in three-dimensional precision allowed the homeowners to understand where he was taking them even before construction began. But Nightengale's ability to customize walls, ceilings, crown molding, and case goods ensured plenty of surprise and intrigue.

A barrel-shaped copper and brass range hood...captures the spirit of the Colonial kitchen, despite its thoroughly modern application.

In the past, the kitchen would have been a galley space used by servants. Today, the kitchen is the hub of the home, and this is no exception. Located in the rear and sited for early morning sun, its large, arched windows overlook the back porch and beyond that, the luxurious gardens and pool.

The space is outfitted with all the amenities. Caesarstone® quartz countertops cap the lightly stained cherry cabinets with their pull-out trays, a lazy Susan, a pop-up mixer stand, an oil pantry near the stove, spice inserts, and a recessed butcher-block cutting board. Deep



- ⌚ Delft pottery and makeshift vases give the sunny windowsill a burst of color.
- ⌚ Understated tiling around the backsplash helps the custom-made, barrel-shaped range hood take center stage in this large, comfortable kitchen.
- ⌚ The ceiling medallion and some of the crown molding are actually formed from foam molds. This allows plenty of architectural details without breaking the bank.





⌚ An antique bed, a pair of tufted Queen Anne-style chairs, and a beautiful area rug in muted colors create a gentle calm in the master bedroom.

⌚ A thick windowsill capped in a granite slab creates an informal plant ledge in this sunny space above the tub. Crème Marsala marble flooring and beautifully designed crown molding with “anaglypta” wallpaper add elegance.

⌚ A marble fireplace with a cherry-wood mantel and a floor-level hearth is appropriate for the genre. The gas ignition would have intrigued our Colonial ancestors.

drawers on the peninsula are used to store dishes and stemware. But the kitchen’s functionality definitely gets lost in the beauty of it. A barrel-shaped copper and brass range hood, which Madsen had forged by New Jersey craftsmen, captures the spirit of the Colonial kitchen, despite its thoroughly modern application.

An informal living area opposite a breakfast nook along with a walk-in pantry and laundry room complete the higher-traffic spaces. From here, the formal dining room is accessed through a lovely butler’s pantry, which is finished in Stained Glass Overlay to give the appearance of real leaded glass without the cost or frailty.

A formal living room offers a quiet respite from activity and was designed with pairs of French doors that can be closed and kept private. A downstairs study functions as the communications hub and features something Thomas Jefferson could never have dreamed of—a computer system and wireless Internet.

Upstairs, the master suite benefits from its location on the east side of the home. In the bath, marble flooring and durable granite countertops combine for luxury and practicality. An authentic claw-foot tub could easily have traveled through the centuries to arrive at its spot, which offers distant views of Yosemite’s famous Half Dome.

Adding the final furnishings turned out to be an easier task than anybody expected thanks, in part, to the fact that there weren’t a lot of choices. Over the years, highboys and curio cabinets have been replaced by everything from leather love seats to glass-top tables. But the owners aren’t that interested in setting trends. To coin a phrase from the author of the Declaration of Independence himself, certain things are self-evident. And a true classic never goes out of style. ■



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